



MDT- Department of Transportation

Aeronautics Division

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August 1999

X-33 Progresses

A 11-member delegation, including legislators, state officials and reporters on a public relations tour coordinated by Senator Conrad Burns visited Palmdale, California home of the X-33, a half-scale prototype of the VentureStar, the potential successor to the space shuttle.

The X-33 is an interesting venture in that not just one company is doing the job. Lockheed Martin is running the show, but other companies are responsible for other aspects of the project. The model and artists' conceptions of the X-33 reveal one glaring fact: There are no windows in the vehicle. That's because the X-33 has no on-board pilots and is flown through ground-based computer control. The X-33 will measure 69 feet from tip to tail and 77 feet from wing tip to wing tip. The takeoff weight is 285,000 pounds, mostly fuel weight.

The X-33 is scheduled to roll off the assembly line in Palmdale January 25. Vibration tests will be conducted in February, cryogenic tests are set for March, while tanking tests are slated for April. Flight readiness tests

will run through May and June and the X-33's first test launch is scheduled for July 1, 2000.

The first flight, headed for Dugway Air Force Base in Utah, will see the X-33 travel 31 miles above the earth while reaching speeds of nine times the speed of sound. Later in 2000, the second test flight will be launched from Edwards Air Force Base with the destination of Malmstrom Air Force Base in Great Falls.

A high-tech brand new X-33 launch pad 40 miles east of Palmdale is now complete. The X-33 will be attached horizontally to a rotating mount and strong back for servicing between flights, with a 9,500 square foot motorized hangar moved over the craft by rail to protect it. When the X-33 is ready for launch, the shelter is retracted 550 feet by rail as the 69 foot, wedge-shaped vehicle is raised for launch.

It will roar off like a rocket and reach a height of nearly 60 miles and a top speed of more than 10,000 mph as it races to Malmstrom in 24 minutes, slowing down and landing like a plane.

During the first 20 seconds of the launch, huge pipes will deluge a deep, thick-



The X-33 wings sport the "Skunk Works" insignia.

concrete flame trench underneath the X-33 with 80,000 gallons of water. The water is designed to cool the launch pad and suppress sound waves, so vibrations don't damage the totally reusable X-33.

The \$32 million X-33 flight operations center sits on 30 acres in the desert of southern California.

The X-33 also features liquid hydrogen and liquid oxygen tanks capable of storing more than 250,000 gallons of the fuel, and a 250-foot tall, 250,000 gallon water tower.

Comparable facilities for the VentureStar spaceport will be twice as large. Montana has four proposed sites that are vying with 28 sites in 15 other states for Lockheed Martin's \$5 billion VentureStar spaceport project.

A Montana contingency will continue to monitor the progress of the X-33 through Senator Burns with visits to the infamous Lockheed "Skunk Works."



Members of the Montana delegation receive a pre-tour briefing from top Lockheed Martin officials.

Administrator's Column

FAA PROPOSED NEW PARK OVERFLIGHT RULES BLASTED: FAA's new Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) which places new restrictions on air tour overflights of the Grand Canyon National Park is blasted by both the United States Air Tour Association (USATA) and the National Air Transportation Association (NATA). USATA President Steve Bassett stated "Once again the Park Service, using FAA as its pawn, has ignored the facts and has proposed outrageous, ridiculous new requirements on Grand Canyon air tour operators specifically designated to destroy their businesses." That the new proposals "are based on voodoo science twice the subject of congressional inquiry and found by nationally recognized acoustics experts to be seriously flawed and unreliable." Bassett said FAA "should be ashamed and embarrassed that its ability to fulfill its own mandate has been eroded to such an extent that land management agencies are now dictating airspace policy. Natural quiet was restored years ago in the Grand Canyon. This proposed regulation is not about the restoration of quiet. It's about killing off an entire segment of the aviation community. If the rest of the aviation industry does not get upset about what's happening to the air tour community, then either they're not paying attention or they simply don't care that precedents are being established regulatorily and politically that will impact their members as well." NATA President Jim Coyne stated that "the dramatic limits being implemented to restrict air tours are based on attempting to meet a noise standard that is virtually quieter than the sound of falling snow. That the air tour industry has been working for several years to strike some type of middle ground, balanced approach to overflights of national parks, but the proposed rulemaking is extreme and ignores the good faith effort by NATA and the entire industry." Coyne also said that the FAA proposal was published despite the overwhelming acceptance of air tours over the Grand Canyon by the general public and park visitors and that Park Service statistics show there were only 36 aircraft noise complaints registered by some five million park visitors. Coyne added, "we don't even know for certain if these complaints were about National Park helicopters or some other non-air tour aircraft." Further, the FAA, at the insistence of the Park Service and the White House, "has effectively told the nearly one million air tour passengers who view the Grand Canyon annually that they are unwelcome and have no right to visit one of America's most breathtaking natural sights. It is a reflection that a small fraction of activists within the environmental movement have won out against those who understand that air tours preserve national parks by keeping visitors off the ground and out of fragile and environmentally sensitive areas of national parks." This doesn't only effect air tour operators as there are current Grand Canyon National Park overflight rules which effect anyone flying over the GCNP and the altitudes are ridiculously set at 14,500 feet except for four corridors where you can fly through at 11,500 feet Northbound and 10,500 feet Southbound. If you have a strong feeling on this issue, and I believe you

should, as Glacier National Park is already proposing restrictions and the Yellowstone National Park will likely be soon to follow, you should send your comments to the U.S. Department of Transportation Dockets, Docket No. FAA-99-5927, 400 Seventh S. SW, Room Plaza 401, Washington, D.C. 20590. **THE DEADLINE FOR FORMAL COMMENTS IS SEPTEMBER 7, 1999.** ➔

CONTINUED GENERAL FUND CONTRIBUTION TO FAA URGED: Thirty-two national aviation organizations, companies, and unions have written to U.S. Senators urging them to continue the general fund contribution to the Federal Aviation Administration. The Aviation Users Trust Fund pays for about 70-75% of the FAA's operational costs and these aviation industry associations, unions, and companies feel strongly that the aviation industry benefits every person and household in the nation and that it is a proper expenditure of general fund money. In a letter to each Senator, 32 airlines, aviation manufacturers, cargo carriers, unions and associations urged that "not only is the general fund contribution a longstanding and appropriate use of general fund revenue, but it is essential to the continued safety and efficiency of our growing air transportation system and to continued U.S. leadership in this important, global industry." That "It is important that the FAA also continue its historic leadership role on aviation regulatory matters. Doing so will reap benefits for the U.S. economy and ensure the safety and security of air travel around the world." The National Civil Aviation Review Commission found that the general fund should partially fund FAA and both the National Governors Association and the National Conference of State Legislatures support continued use of the general fund for aviation. "We are mindful of the difficult decisions facing congress in allocating discretionary resources to our nation's many needs," the letter stated. "However, few, if any investments provide greater returns to our economy than those made to our aviation system. We believe that efforts to end the general fund contribution to the FAA could reduce policymakers flexibility to provide for the long-term needs of the FAA particularly in less prosperous economic times." ➔

GOOD NEWS FOR A&P MECHANICS: The FAA surprised the aviation industry by announcing its decision to withdraw its Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) which would have made many significant and undesirable changes to the Airframe and Powerplant (A&P) Mechanic certificate. The FAA received an overwhelming number of responses opposing the NPRM. The National Air Transportation Association (NATA) led the charge on behalf of its Fixed Base Operators (FBO) membership in opposition to the FAA proposal. The NATA felt that the proposed rule changes would have placed a severe burden on A&P mechanics and crippled the aircraft maintenance industry. The Aeronautics Division along with many Montana A&P mechanics responded to the NPRM voicing strong opposition to what we all felt were unnecessary and devastating proposed rule changes. I'd like to commend all of you who took the time to respond to this ludicrous NPRM to help get it killed. ➔



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Marc Racicot, Governor
Marv Dye, Director

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Telephone - 444-2506
P.O. Box 5178
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Michael D. Ferguson
Administrator

Aeronautics Board
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Editorial Assitant:
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Annual Fly-in – Airport Grand Opening

The annual fall fly-in sponsored by the South Central chapter of the Montana Pilots Association and Billings area EAA chapter this year will be a combined effort with the Columbus Barnstormers, Columbus City County Airport Board of Directors and the town of Columbus.

This year's fly in will be to welcome and encourage everyone to come see and enjoy the new Columbus airport. This new facility in no way resembles the airport of old. The event is set for September 10-12. Starting out on Friday for the early arrivers who will be met by the troops setting up for Saturdays events. Rides to motels will be available and maybe even a hamburger and a cocktail! Saturday starts out with breakfast by the EAA chapter. There will be airplane rides given throughout the day. Various local groups will provide lunch.

The airport dedication will take place after lunch as will the ever-popular airplane games (spot landing, flour bombing, poker-run, etc.) Something new this year!!! When you fly in try to land on the big white stripe. You just entered the spot landing contest whether you wanted to or not! Things of interest will be antique airplanes, war birds, powered parachutes, skydiving (tandem skydiving for the adventurous) and maybe even some neat old cars.

The evening meal will be a steak fry barbecue put on by the local MPA followed by a ramp hangar dance with music from the 50s and 60s and country western. Also this year there will be a SWAP MEET area set aside so bring your valuable airplane or whatever stuff to sell or trade.

Sunday will be another EAA breakfast with no other events planned. For information check your local FBO for a poster coming soon or call Alan or Wanda Rickman at 322-5974 or 328-4375.

Stimpson Looking Forward to New Duties

Edward W. Stimpson, who has spent nearly all of his career in Washington D.C. and most of that time heading the General Aviation Manufacturers Association, is looking forward to new duties when he takes over as the U.S. representative at the headquarters of the International Civil Aviation Organization. Montana was fortunate to have Ed participate in its 1994 Montana Aviation Conference at Billings.

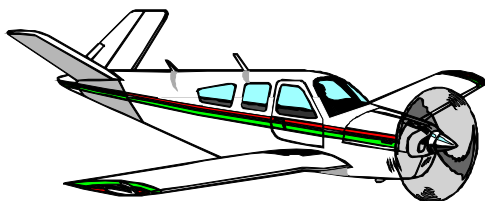
Stimpson was named to the new ICAO post by President Clinton, who also nominated him to hold the rank of ambassador in his new post. The nomination documents were signed but it will probably be some time later this year before the Senate Foreign Relations committee considers the nomination. In the interim, Stimpson plans to report to Montreal in September to begin serving as the U. S. representative at ICAO.

ICAO was formed in 1944 to establish international standards and coordinate policies for aviation in anticipation of the massive growth in civil aviation operations after World War II. ICAO's first actions included the adoption of English as the international language of aviation and the establishment of certain navigation standards. The organization, now an agency of the United Nations, is headquartered in Montreal. Representatives of all 180-member nations meet every three years, but ongoing operations are overseen by the ICAO Council, whose membership in-

cludes representatives of 33 countries, including the U.S. The next session of the ICAO Council will convene in September.

In his role at ICAO, Stimpson technically will be a State Department employee, although he also expects to work closely with FAA officials. On certain high-profile issues, such as invoking sanctions against a country, Stimpson said State Department officials obviously will be heavily involved in shaping the U.S. policy at ICAO. On technical issues, however, Stimpson said he expects to work directly with FAA and DOT. He noted that ICAO is wrestling with several important issues, such as GPS navigation systems and noise and emission regulations, including implementation of issues addressed in the Kyoto Treaty last year.

Montana congratulates Ed and wishes him well in his new endeavors.



Calendar

August 2 – 6 - CAP'S Aerospace Challenge For Youth, Missoula 888-454-3287 for info.

August 5 – 8 - MAAA Fly-in, Pogreba Field, 123.9 Tower, Three Forks.

August 6 – 8 - Montana CAP State Conference, Missoula 888-454-3287 for info.

August 6 – 8 - Sixth Annual Splash In – Fly In, Stillwater Landing.

August 27 – 28 - CAP Search & Rescue Training Exercise, Kalispell, 888-454-3287 for info.

August 28 - Polson Airport Grand Opening and Fly-in, various dignitaries, airplane rides and static display. Call Tom at 883-9392 for info.

September 10 - 12 - Columbus Airport Grand Opening and South Central MPA Hangar and Billings EAA Fly-in. Lots of activities and fun planned. Call Rickmans at 328-4375 for info.

September 11 - Beaverhead County Airport Days. Breakfast 7-10; lunch 11-2, flying demonstrations at 10, aircraft displays, Dillon Hangar MPA.

September 17 – 19 - Mountain Search Pilot Clinic, Kalispell.

September 18 - Aerotronics Annual Open House, Billings.

September 24 – 26 - Montana Pilots Association Fall Fly-in and Experimental Aircraft Association Air Fair, Great Falls.

October 2 - Hirsch 6th Annual Fly-in. Hirsch Ranch east of Rock Springs, MT, beginning with dawn patrol, air games, good food, excellent socializing! Call Al or Barb at 354-6009 for more info.

October 21 – 23 - AOPA Expo '99, Atlantic City, NJ.

November 6 - AOM Board Meeting, Helena.

March 2-4, 2000 - Montana Aviation Conference, Billings.

GAMA Reports Healthy Second Quarter

The general aviation manufacturing industry continues to report increased aircraft shipments and billings through the second quarter of 1999 according to the General Aviation Manufacturers Association (GAMA). Total billings were up dramatically to \$3.5 billion for the first six months of 1999, a 45.1% increase compared to \$2.4 billion in 1998. Total aircraft unit shipments for the first half of 1999 increased 13.5% to 1,082 units, up from 953 units in the first two quarters of 1998.

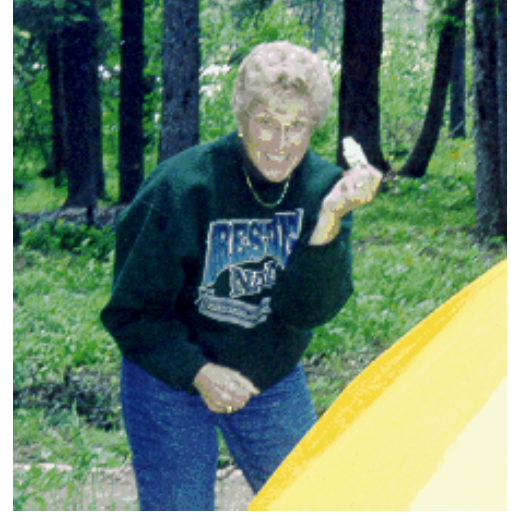
Jet deliveries were up 32.4% with deliveries totaling 225 aircraft and piston aircraft shipments also increased 10.9% to 745 aircraft. Turboprops were stable with 112 units in the first six months of 1999.

Export billings jumped 82.8% with export shipments remaining near the same level through the second quarter of 1999.

Schafer Meadows Annual Work Session



More than 40 aircraft and 150 volunteers gathered in the Great Bear Wilderness to participate in the annual work session. The Montana Aeronautics Division coordinates with the US Forest Service, the Montana Pilots Association and the Montana Flying Farmers to organize the event.



Lt. Governor Judy Martz and husband Harry arrived from Butte on Saturday in support of the many aviation enthusiasts whom gather each year for the purpose of preserving this backcountry airstrip. Runway maintenance included filling of gopher holes, rock removal and placing of a new windsock.



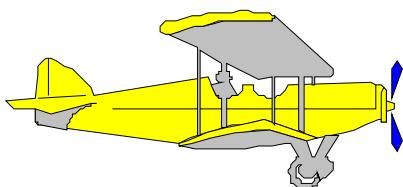
Pete Sanders, Roy Hollandsworth and Bob Davis were charged with installing a water filter for the main water system that supplies the campground. At the request of the USFS the Montana Aeronautics Board granted matching funds from its Airport Development Grant Program for the filter as well as for two bear boxes that were installed during the work session.



Loren Smith of Great Falls flew in four team members from KFBB-TV, Channel 5 of Great Falls. The reporters and camera crew covered the work session and conveyed the story in splendid style to its viewer's Sunday evening. More than 75 rails were skinned and installed in the ongoing fencing efforts.



Dinner Saturday evening was provided by Loren Smith and Jane Mart of Great Falls. These volunteers oversee the main course...roasted pig and baron of beef that was served up with Indian fry bread, corn-on-the cob, watermelon and strawberry shortcake! It just keeps getting better every year! Thanks to Loren, Jane and the many others who assisted in preparing the Saturday night spread. Bob Lipscomb, Rick Kraft and David Ries headed up the trail crew that performed trail maintenance throughout the campground. (If anyone arrived home with a white cooler/red top that doesn't belong to you it is Davids. Please call our office).



13th Annual Northwest Mountain Family Fly-In

The community of West Yellowstone, the Federal Aviation Administration, Montana Aeronautics Division, Idaho Aeronautics Division and the EAA pulled together to host the West Yellowstone Family Fly-In. A total of 186 aircraft were counted on the airport ramp of West Yellowstone. Pilots participated in the FAA "Wings" program; flight instructors volunteered their time for the program. Aviation safety seminars were open to the public, pilots and flight instructors.

Len Wheeler of the FAA and Jeanne MacPherson, Montana Aeronautics put together a three-day Aviation Careers (ACE) program for high school students interested in aviation. ACE dovetailed in with the West Yellowstone Family Fly-In. Fifteen high school students camped at West Yellowstone airport. They attended classroom sessions on preflight, navigation, search and rescue, a survival field session, college and technology options for aviation careers. The students were treated to a balloon flight and fixed wing flights. On Saturday the ACE program watched Harrison Ford fly in to the West Yellowstone airport in his de Havilland Beaver.

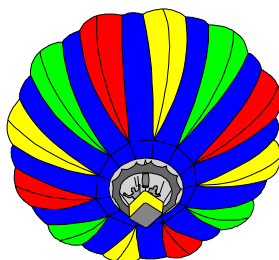


A big thank you to all that helped with the ACE program, Mike Rand, David Kimball, Dave Harpster, Darrell Maybee, Bill Burkland, Andree and Carl Anderburg, Jerry Hok, Lauri Fahlberg, Debby Hansmann, Sargent Harold Blalock, CR Eisenzimer, Russ Dahl, Don Paul, West Yellowstone Smoke Jumpers and the hot air balloon sponsored by Diversified Metal Products, Inc.

Pictured clockwise: The West Yellowstone ramp was lined with airplanes at the 1999 West Yellowstone Expo. Harrison Ford and Jeanne MacPherson. Ashley Lehman of Helena helps with the hot air balloon at the ACE academy. Dan Kimball, ACE participant takes flight in the orbitron. ACE program students participate in survival lunch break of MRE (Meals Ready to Eat!)



Kudos to all the people that worked so hard to put on the West Yellowstone Family Fly-In. It was a successful event due in great part to your many hours of hard work!



Each One, Reach One

The first annual Young Eagles Program sponsored by the Billings EAA Chapter on Saturday, June 26th was a well-run, successful event. Each one, reach one speaks to those pilots and aviation enthusiasts that share the spark that ignites the love of aviation with a young person.

Exxon helped to sponsor this year's event with a generous donation of aviation fuel. Pilot's came from miles away to offer rides to the new young eagles. There were static displays, preflight of airplanes, a pancake breakfast and burgers for lunch. For some it was their very first flight and for some it was a love of flight!

Congratulations to the Billings EAA Chapter for a job well done and many THANKS to Exxon for supporting this excellent program.



Pictured above. Volunteers registered the Young Eagles for their orientation flights as parents watch and wait anxiously for their elated children. At right, aircraft proceeds to line up as Young Eagles are loaded into each. A well organized, smooth procession kept the youngsters moving and aircraft flowing.



Britain Moves to Privatize ATC System

Britain plans to sell 51% of its air traffic control system in a bid to secure outside management and an investment of one billion pounds (\$1.6 billion) over 10 years. Under the proposal, employees of National Air Traffic Services (NATS) will be given the opportunity buy 5% of the new company's stock and the government will retain 49% of the shares. The sale could take as long as two years to complete.

Britain is the first nation in Europe to try to privatize its ATC system and officials hope other countries will follow its lead.

NATS is currently a wholly owned subsidiary of the UK Civil Aviation Authority, which said the sale should improve standards by making the regulatory regime more

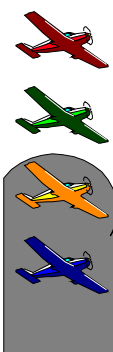
transparent. Given past and prospective growth in air traffic there has been no suggestion of job cuts. Only Canada and New Zealand have privatized their air traffic systems.

The plan is opposed by the Institution of Professionals, Managers and Specialists, which represents UK controllers. The union questions the safety of putting air traffic control in the hands of a profit-making organization, calling it "unconvincing, dangerous and unnecessary". The union's general secretary said, "Air travelers in Britain are about to become guinea pigs for a very dangerous experiment that does not have the confidence of the staff who would have to operate it."

Cessna Wins 172 Fleet

Cessna Aircraft won an order for 19 of its Model 172 Skyhawks from Daniel Webster College of Nashua, NH. Delivery of the first seven aircraft is scheduled next month, with the remaining 12 to be shipped to the school in the fall of 2000. Cessna said the Skyhawks will replace the school's fleet of Model 152s.

The Daniel Webster order is the latest in a series of sale and deliveries of single-engine aircraft by Cessna to educational institutions, the company said, including: 10 Skyhawks to Kansas State University; 10 to the Spartan School of Aeronautics; the purchase of six additional aircraft by Western Michigan University, bringing its Skyhawk fleet to 38; a total of 14 Skyhawks and Skyhawk SPs purchased for U.S. Air Force Flight Training Centers; and the University of Dubuque's recent purchase of five Skyhawks.



Patrick Doyle Benefit A Great Success

The Turner community and friends organized a benefit for local pilot, Pat Doyle who was diagnosed with cancer. The two-day affair kicked off on Saturday, June 26th, with a barbecue dinner. Bob Sivertsen served as auctioneer at the Saturday evening auction that was made possible by individuals and businesses who donated many items. The evening ended with a dance held in the Doyle hangar.

Sunday morning began with a delicious pancake feed served by the Hogeland and Turner Lions Club. Reverend Rowlie Hutton held a special church service at the Turner school.

Flour bombing, rides and spot landing were the events of the day at the Turner Airport. The big attraction was an aerobatics air show done Oshkosh style by Ray Williams of Clarksville, TN and Allan Shkuratoff of Mossbank, Canada.

The weekend was a total success and everyone had fun. The Montana Aviation community sends the best of wishes to Pat Doyle and his family. A big thank you to all that helped to make the event special and successful.

Pictured clockwise: Four young girls thinking about flight at the Pat Doyle benefit. The Doyle hangar was filled with donated auction items as they await their new home. Standing room only – the community and friend show their support for Pat. Ray Williams of Clarksville, TN in his Pitts Special aircraft as he gets ready for his airshow performance – OUTSTANDING!



Runway Maintenance Alert - Vegetation

Several pilots from around the state have notified the Division of that a large number of runways throughout the state have a serious weed problem. The problems stem from an overgrowth of vegetation on the runway edges and around the runway lights. Allowing vegetation to grow unabated in the runway environment can have some serious side effects. Vegetation that is growing next to the runway edges acts as a catalyst in the disintegration of the runway edges by breaking up the asphalt and holding water from properly draining from the runway surface, thereby adding to water's devastating effects on asphalt. Weeds that are allowed to grow around runway lights has the potential to completely obscure the lights from aircraft that are using them, or worse, aircraft may actually line up off of the runway centerline and attempt to approach the runway from the side of the runway.

The Division recommends that all airports mow regularly, depending on the amount of vegetation present, to eliminate any problems before they start. In order to keep control of the problem, the Division also recommends the use of ground sterilants where ap-

plicable. Sterilants should be used for approximately a 10-foot diameter around runway lights and in enough quantity to eliminate vegetation from the runway edges. It should be noted, however, that over use of sterilants can have an even worse effect than vegetation on a runway due to over erosion of the surface around the runway leading to excessive runway edge and runway light base lip edge heights. All around, mowing is the best resource to use to keep control of runway area vegetation if the airport management has the machinery, money and time to do it.

Turf runways are especially hard to keep in good order due to problems with overgrowth, undergrowth and gophers. Typically owners of turf runways do not have the budget available to maintain them as they would like, however, it might be much cheaper in the long run when weighing the concerns of aircraft liability and safety to maintain them to the standard they require, rather than the standard that seems to be accepted. If you would like more information regarding runway maintenance or some ideas for good grass for turf runways, please contact the Division for more information.

Ronan Airport CTAF Changed To 122.80 MHz:

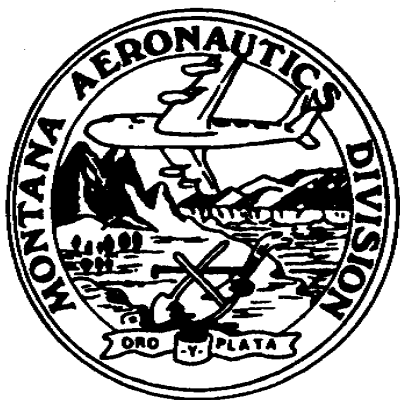
At the request of Lake County airport Board the Aeronautics Division has installed a Unicom radio to serve the Ronan airport.

The installation of this radio creates an Aeronautical Advisory station (Unicom). FCC rules and Regulations make it mandatory that the airport frequency be changed to an approved Unicom frequency of 122.80 MHz.

This means that all airport communications and pilot controlled lighting are now on 122.80 MHz.

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